



INFORMATION – COMMUNIQUÉ

For Immediate Release

Friday, May 15, 2009

City Continuing Aggressive Larviciding Program

Cankerworm control program to commence next week

Winnipeg, MB - The City of Winnipeg's Insect Control Branch is continuing its aggressive larviciding program in Winnipeg and the surrounding 10 km mosquito abatement district. Though receding flood waters and recent rainfall have caused more standing water; cooler temperatures have resulted in slower larval development, enabling helicopter and ground crews to treat a significant number of standing water sites where larvae are present. To date, the spring larviciding program has been successful in controlling spring larval nuisance mosquitoes.

The City's cankerworm control program will commence next week as monitoring of egg masses and adult cankerworm populations shows the potential for a significant cankerworm emergence in certain areas within Winnipeg over the next few weeks. The appropriate time to treat trees is once the leaves have burst and surveillance data identifies that the larvae or worms are actively feeding on the foliage. Currently there are no larva present and there is not enough foliage to start treating using Btk (*Bacillus thuringiensis var kurstaki*).

The cankerworm control program is focused on street, boulevard and City park trees. When the cankerworm control program starts next week, a follow up PSA will issued announcing the areas/IMA's that will be set for initial treatment.

MORE INFORMATION:

Mosquito Trap Counts

The AFA (Adulticiding Factor Analysis Guideline) continues to be "Low". Surveillance data indicates low to moderate levels of larvae in most standing water sites. Trap counts have been zero since the monitoring of adult nuisance mosquitoes began May 1, 2009 using the New Jersey Light Traps. Over the next 7-10 days, the Insect Control Branch

anticipates only a small emergence of spring nuisance mosquitoes. Trap count data can be viewed at the Insect Control website at Winnipeg.ca/bugline.

Midges not a concern

In addition, people have been seeing “swarms of insects” that look a lot like mosquitoes. These are not mosquitoes but *midges* likely from the families of the Chironomidae, Tipulidae and Dixidae, they do not have the biting mouth parts of a mosquito and are of no concern.

Fight the Bite

The City is strongly encouraging property owners to also help “Fight the Bite” as up to 50 percent of all standing water sites are located on private property. Homeowners can take one of the following steps to eliminate standing water on their properties:

- **Dump It!** - containers
- **Drain It!** - eavestroughing or unused containers
- **Cover It!** - rain water collection containers
- **Fill It!** - low-lying areas
- **Treat It!** - biological larvicide

Cankerworm Forecast

Current surveillance data indicates that the City of Winnipeg is likely to experience populations of cankerworms and defoliation levels similar to those that occurred in 2007.

This forecast is based on:

- Recent data collected from the spring adult female cankerworm moths emergence which were captured on the tree bands.
- Data collected from the fall adult cankerworm female moths which laid their eggs in the tree canopy during the fall of 2008.

What areas will be impacted by cankerworms?

Monitoring of egg masses and adult cankerworm populations have shown that there is a potential for cankerworm larva to cause significant defoliation of American Elms, Manitoba Maple and Ash trees in many parts of the City where there are large stands of these trees. These populations generally follow a natural five to seven year cycle and have been building up their populations over the past couple of years.

Homeowners are reminded to remove tree bands

Many citizens of Winnipeg banded their trees this season and this will certainly help to lessen the cankerworm population in those areas. Areas of the City which have been extensively banded should experience less defoliation than areas where banding was less prevalent.

Homeowners are reminded to remove bands on their trees as they serve no useful purpose now since the adult moths have already laid their eggs. Leaving the bands on the tree will cause more damage to the tree now as the bands will encourage rotting on the bark, thereby affecting the health of the tree.

Individuals who are opposed to the use of insecticides on or adjacent to their principle residence for the control of cankerworms may register their opposition in writing to the Insect Control Branch, 3 Grey St., Winnipeg, Manitoba, R2L 1V2 or by faxing it to 311 or by registering online at Winnipeg.ca/bugline or contacting 311.

Interested individuals may acquire more information by contacting the 311 or by visiting the City's Insect Control website at Winnipeg.ca/bugline.

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Media inquiries may be directed to the City of Winnipeg Media Inquiry Line at (204) 986-6000 or via email at MediaInquiry@winnipeg.ca